

THE EASY MARK

Property of Johnnie
Speer.

CAST

JIMMIE LIGHT COMEDY
 SLINKY HILLMAN HEAVY
 SAM LOBE LEAD
 WILLIE EIGHT COMEDY
 COLLECTOR VERY SMALL BIT
 NETTIE INGENUE
 MARY LEAD

SETTING

The interior of Jimmie's flat in New York

PROPS

Three straight chairs
 One large arm chair
 Suit case with a patch one end
 Small gas range
 Table for four to sit at
 Dishes
 Cooking utensils
 Saxophone
 Several bottles of Scotch
 A packet of dope

Handcuffs
 Revolver
 Several newspapers

THE EASY MARK

WILLIE

(ENTERS R. AND X'S TO D. L. U. AND LISTENS. THERE IS A CONTINUOUS KNOCKING ON THE D. L. U. WILLIE HAS A SAXOPHONE IN HIS HAND)

VOICE

(OFF L. U. KNOCKING SEVERAL TIMES) Hey! Anybody home. Better answer if you are.

MARY

(ENTERS R.) For crimps sake what is it?

WILLIE

Shhhhh! Shhhh! (FRANTICALLY MOTIONS HER TO BE QUIET)

VOICE

(KNOCKS REAL LOUD THEN QUILTS) Confound it. I'll get you yet. (FOOTSTEPS ARE HEARD GOING DOWN THE HALL)

WILLIE

(OPENS THE DOOR AND CAUTIOUSLY PEEKS OUT. THEN SHUTS IT AND GRINS) He's gone!

MARY

Well, good grief who was it?

WILLIE

The collector. He wants his weekly three bucks for the saxophone.

MARY

Why don't you let the thing go back?

WILLIE

Gee whiz, Sis, what do I want to do that for when I've already mastered the scale on the thing. When Jimmie gets home I'll borrow three bucks from him and pay the next installment.

MARY

Sure, you bum, that's all you've been doing- -borrowing off my husband.

WILLIE

Aw, Jimmie, don't care.

MARY

Well, maybe I do.

WILLIE

Now, sis, don't get canary.

MARY

Well, it makes me tired. You're my brother and all of that, but you've got no right to be loafing all the time while my husband makes the dough for the whole family. Why don't you go back to driving a truck?

WILLIE

How can I? The boss won't let me. When you're fired you're fired.

MARY

Well, you could try and get another job some where's else.

WILLIE

Aw, don't Gripe, sis. Listen, when I learn to paly this saxophone, I'm going to get me a job in some jazz orchestra, and then I'll pull down some real doghh.

MARY

Horse feathers! (GOES OVER TO THE GAS RANGE AND LOOKS AFTER SOME THINGS THERE.)

NETTIE

(ENTERS R.) Mary! Pin my dress in back. Quick! Sam's coming.

MARY

(PINNING THE DRESS) Then you're not going to eat with us?

NETTIE

No. Sam's taking me to dinner.

WILLIE

Say, that guy's got his nerve.

NETTIE

How so? How so?

WILLIE

Lissen, I heard several guys tell me that they seen you in a dump the other night with some bimbo, and I'll bet it was Sam.

NETTIE

You mean a bootlegging joint? Well, what of it? Sam's a law, and he had business there. If I want to go with him, it's my business---not yours.

SAM LOBE

(KNOCKS ON THE DOOR L. U.)

NETTIE

There's Sam now. (STARTS TO OPEN DOOR)

WILLIE

Wait a minute! It might be the bill collector. (GOES TOO DOOR AND OPENS DOOR PEEKS THROUGH THE KEY HOLE) Nope it. aint. (OPENS DOOR) Come in.

SAM LOBE

What's the matter?

WILLIE

Nothin' just thought you were a bill collector.

SAM LOBE

Oh I see. Are you ready to go, Nettie?

NETTIE

Sure, just a minute. (GETS HAT AND COAT)

SAM LOBE

How's your brother coming on the saxophone any way?

NETTIE

He's not my brother, Sam. He's my brother in law. Please don't

accuse me of being related to that.

SAM LOBE

Well, what is he then?

NETTIE

My brother-in-law and that's all. (JIMMIE ENTERS R. HE IS WEARING HIS BEST SUIT. HAS A PAPER STUCK IN THE COAT POCKET. JIMMIE IS A SHORT LITTLE FELLOW BORN AND RAISED IN NEW YORK) Here's my brother

SAM LOBE

Oh---hello, Jimmie. I was just getting your family straightened out.

JIMMIE

What's the matter, gonna pinch one of us?

SAM LOBE

Nothin' of the kind. I've been going with your sister for six months now, and I've really never quite got the family straightened out. You see I thought all along that Willie there was her brother.

MARY

No, he's my brother.

SAM LOBE

Oh I see! Well, come on, Nettie, or we'll be late.

WILLIE

Where you goin'?

NETTIE

None of your business!

SAM LOBE

(SMILES) We're going to a Policeman's benefit, Willie. By, the way, Jimmie, you remember that shooting the other day. Well, one of our brother officers was shot in the hold up. We're taking up a collection to bury him. Would like to donate fifty cents?

JIMMIE

Fifty cents to bury a policeman?

SAM LOBE

Yes.

JIMMIE

(REACHES IN HIS POCKET AND HANDS HIM A BUNCH OF CIGAR CUPONS) Sure! Here's two dollars; bury four of 'em.

MARY

Why, Jimmie, the idea of talkin' like that---and your own good father a policeman what was shot just like that scrape yesterday.

JIMMIE

Aw I was only kiddin'---

SAMELOBE

I guess you were. These are only cigar cupons you gave me.

JIMMIE

(TAKES THEM BACK) Sure! It's all I got beside a quarter. I'm sorry.

SAM LOBE

That's all right. Have a cigar, Jimmie. Come on, Nettie. We'll see you folks later. Ta! Ta! (THEY EXIT R. U.)

MARY

Have a good time, Nettie. (FOLLOWING THEM TO THE DOOR)

NETTIE

(GOING ON DOWN THE HALL WAY) Sure! I always do!

MARY

(SHUTS THE DOOR AND LOOKS AT JIMMIE) Say, what's the idea of wearing your good suit to work in. You've worn that suit for three days. The idea. There's no sense in messin' around a drug store with good clothes like that on. Tomorrow you wear your workin' clothes, understand?

JIMMIE

Aw, quit your crabbin', will you? (TAKES OFF COAT AND HANGS IT ON THE BACK OF THE CHAIR. JIMMIE IS TIRED. X'S OVER TO WILLIE WHO IS STUDYING A MUSIC SHEET AND FINGERING THE NOTES WITH HIS SAXOPHONE) Hello, Ted Lewis? How's the Jazz King?

WILLIE

Well, I can play a couple of pieces good now. I played one selection pretty near through just by ear.

JIMMIE

Who stopped you, the nieghbors?

MARY

Now you let my brother alone. In a week or two, he'll be able to pay most anything.

JIMMIE

In a week or two we'll be put out of here for disturbin' the police.

MARY

You never got a laugh on that one yet. Nothin' like tryin' though.

JIMMIE

Go to it. I always like to see a guy try to improve himself. Now maybe when you get goin' good I can help you land a orchestra job. There's Slinky Hilman. He knows a lot of those cabaret birds and--

MARY

Yeah? Well, we'll take nothing from him---

JIMMIE

What's the matter with Slinky?

MARY

Enough. If I had my way, he'd never step a foot in this house---nor anybody in it would speak to him.

JIMMIE

Well, what have you got against him?

MARY

Now, listen, Jimmie, that big gorilla is always tryin' to take your sister Nettie out, and that's all he's hanging around you for.

JIMMIE

What of it? Don't you suppose if I thought he was wragg I'd stop it in a minute.

MARY

I tell you, Jimmie, that guy's no good.

JIMMIE

Well for the love of---say, did I ever have a fried that you did like? Did I? Look at ---er---look at Dannie South. As nice a feller as ever lived. And you and Nettie nearly through him out of the house.

WILLIE

(LOOKING UP FROM HIS SAXOPHONE) Where is he now?

JIMMIE

He was one of--

MARY

Yeah, he's doin' time in the pen.

JIMMIE

(REALIZING WHAT HAS BEEN SAID GIVES A DIRTY LOOK TO WILLIE) You would bring that up, wouldn't ya?

MARY

Sure that's where your swell friend is---up in Sing Sing.

JIMMIE

He is not. He's in Leavenworth!

MARY

Jimmie, it aint because they're your friends, but you're so easy that you fall for a lot of wise birds that thank they can use you---

JIMMIE

What? Me fall for a lot of wise birds? Well, that certainly is a hot one. Say, do you think these wise crackers put anything over on me? If you do, get it out of your nut right away. I wasn't born and brung up in this town for hhhthing.

MARY

I'm tellin' you Slinky Hillman is a bad egg.

JIMMIE

Awww!

WILLIE

Just the same, I seen Slinky with some pretty bad lookin' goofers, Jimmie.

JIMMIE

Well, he's a pretty good friend to me and he's done me some pretty good favors, if you want to know. And right now--(STOPS SUDDENLY)

MARY

Well, what?

JIMMIE

Aw, nothin'.

MARY

(LOOKS AT JIMMIE'S COAT ON THE BACK OF THE CHAIR AND DISCOVERS A DIRTY SPOT) Look at that spot on your new suit. (TAKES IT) Now I'll have to clean that. Oh you mess! (EXITS L WITH THE COAT)

JIMMIE

Gosh, a fine chance a feller's got with her ravin' all the time like that.

WILLIE

Whatd'ye mean, by a chance, Jimmie. What's up?

JIMMIE

Well, I'll tell ya, and if you let Mary find it out, I'll beat your face in. Get me? I'll smash ya.

WILLIE

Yeh. What is it?

JIMMIE

Well, the reason I been wearin' that good suit is because three days ago I got fired out of the drug store for bein' late several mornings

WILLIE

Oh, and you been lookin' for a job. I get ya. Gee, and job's are scarcer than hen's teeth now.

JIMMIE

Don't I know it? I've covered every square foot of New York City and not a chance---not a chance. Remmber though-- not a word to Mary.

WILLIE

I won't say nothin'.

MARY

(ENTERS WITH COAT AND PUTS IT ON THE BACK OF THE CHAIR) There now it's cleaned. That suit wouldn't lat you no time if you wore it every day. You need a new suit, Jimmie.

JIMMIE

Sure---and if I had the money I'd get it. I know how to get some money too.

MARY

How? Rob a bank I suppose.

JIMMIE

No. Lissen, I know a guy who has a cousin on a ship who can get good Scotch at thirty dollars the case. And they're sellin' it up town for sixty and sixty eight dollars. There's a chance!

MARY

My Gawd! Now you want to be a bootlegger. And you know where that'll land you. Right in with your friend South.

JIMMIE

(GLOOMILY) Who said anything about being a bootlegger but you? Where am I goin' to get thirty bucks for even one case, huh?

WILLIE

Well, bootlegging sure has it's possibilities. I could get thirty

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dollars a case trucking hootch in Jersey, if Mary would let me do it. But she wouldn't even let me go back and tell the guy "No".

JIMMIE

Well, she was right. Mary aint so dumb I guess at that.

MARY

Well, then answer me. What's the difference in what Willie was goin' to do, and what you was talkin' about doin' if you had the thirty bucks for even one case huh?

JIMMIE

A lot of difference. In the first place, how can you be sure about this here now Eighteenth Ammendment huh? Some guy says there must be something wrong with a law that so many people want to break. Therefore if they all want to break it, why it aint no law, is it? Well, then if it aint no law. How are you breakin' it? Laugh that one off.

MARY

(GETTING UP) Listen--Jimmi, e yours and Bettie's father was a cop, and a grand one too. If it hadn't been for them dirty hop-heads, of loft robbers that killed him, he'd maybe a gone way up.

JIMMIE

I didn't say nothin' about hop heads. You know what I think of them.

MARY

All right! All right! Just keep your silly notions to yourself. Think about 'em, but don't try to carry 'em out, or somebody will have to carry you out. Say, I've got something else to pick with you now---

JIMMIE

(HOLDING HIS HEAD) Oh Lord!

MARY

You swiped three dollars out of my pitcher---that's the money I had for the ice man.

JIMMIE

Oh to heck with the ice-man.

MARY

Listen, what did you do with that three dollars---Come on, tell me.

JIMMIE

All right, all right---look at the calendar.

MARY

(LOOKS AT CALENDAR) Today's the sixth---

JIMMIE

Tomorrow's the seventh ---

MARY

And---(SEES RED RING AROUND THE EIGHT) Thenext day is the eighth--our wedding annniversary!

JIMMIE

(TAKES OUT A SMALL PACKAGE FROM HIS COAT BEHIND THE CHAIR AND HANDS IT TO HER) And here's what I done with our three dollars---

MARY

(EAGERLY OPENS PACKAGE AND FINDS A VERY FANCY LACE HANKERCHIEF) Oh---
Jimmie! (BEGINS TO CRY) It's too perty!

JIMMIE

Gosh! Don't cry about it. Remember that night we was walkin' and you saw it in the window----well I got it and if we don't eat we should worry, we can still blow our nose.

MARY

(HUGGING HIM) Jimmie! You're the sweetest little bear in all the world. (SITS ON HIS LAP)

JIMMIE

(GRINNING) That aint what ya said awhile ago. (HUGS HER TOO)

WILLIE

For cryin' out loud, why don't you wait till you're alone?

MARY

That's what we're waiting for. Beat it!

WILLIE

Jeez! I'm glad I aint married. (EXITS L.)

MARY

(REGARDING JIMMIE FONDLY) Sometimes I bet you wish you wasn't married, don't cha?

JIMMIE

Go on, where'd you get that stuff?

MARY

(PETTING HIM) Do you still love me, Jimmie?

JIMMIE

What do you think?

MARY

I'm afraid I razz you too much.

JIMMIE

Oh that's all right. If it wasn't for scrappin' we wouldn't have nuttin' to talk about.

MARY

Five years we been married. What fools we was about each other when we first met, wasn't we, Jimmie?

JIMMIE

We had it bad all right.

MARY

You was nutty about me then all right, wasn't you, Jimmie.

JIMMIE

Sure---aint supper ready yet? (SHE GETS UP HURT. HE CATCHES HER BY ARM) Hey, now wait a minute. I'm nutty about you still. I was just thinkin' about something else, that's all.

MARY

Yeh. I seen you was. Le'go!

JIMMIE

I got to get out early. I'm goin' ---er---round the corner to the bowling tourney. What's the matter with you? You don't think I'm chasing around with any other dames or anything like that, do you?

MARY

Not on your wages!

JIMMIE

Sure, they're you go. Sittin' in me lap for a close-up one minute, and then next laying me out with a nasty crack.

MARY

Aw go blow your nose.

JIMMIE

(REACHES FOR THE HANKERCHIEF) All right, give your hankerschief.

MARY

(SNATCHING IT AWAY) I will not. (FINALLY SHE LAUGHS) Oh you little monkey!

JIMMIE

(GETS UP AND PUTS HIS ARMS AROUND HER) Gosh, honey, there's lots worse husbands than me, you know.

MARY

And a lot better to. Jimmie, why don't ya stay home tonight. Remember how we did when we was first married. You used to stay at home--- and we sit around---you'd have on your loungin' robe, and house-slippers I'd wear that pretty negligee I got for a gift, and you and me would just be together---we could read, and talk and eat---(THEY BOTH LAUGH Remember!

JIMMIE

(SMILING) Ha huh---I'll tell you what we'll have for supper tonight.

MARY

What?

JIMMIE

We'll have some honeymoon salad.

MARY

Honeymoon salad. What's that?

JIMMIE

Lettuce alone with very little dressing! (THEY BOTH LAUGH AND EXIT L.)

***** NUMBER ONE *****

SLINKY HILLMAN

(RINGS DOOR BELL R. U.)

MARY

(ENTERS L.) Wonder who that is.

JIMMIE

(ENTERS L.) Must be Slinky Hilman. He said he was comin' over.

MARY

Oh that bum! He'd better not put any of his bootlegger ideas in your head, I'm tellin' you. (STARTS TO OPEN DOOR R. U.)

WILLIE

(ENTERS L.) Wait don't open it. It might be the guy for my sax! Shhhh! Shhhh! (GOES TO DOOR AND PEEKS THROUGH KEY HOLE) No it's all right! (OPENS DOOR) Come in!

SLINKY HILLMAN

(ENTERS. HE IS AFLASHILY DRESSED TYPICAL GANGSTER FROM NEW YORK) (SORT OF A BULL DOZING UGLY FACED TYPE) (LOUD) Hello! Folkes!

MARY

(TURNS AWAY FROM HIM) Humph!

SLINKY HILMAN

Where's Nettie---thought I'd call and see if she'd like to go to a swell crawl at the Rough and Tumble Athletic Club on Saturday night It's very extra special. No rough stuff. And you go in costume or evening clothes.

MARY

Well, I'm quite sure Nettie will not be able to go. And, Mr. Slinky, I would thank you to lay off trying to make my husband a bootlegger. You can talk business all you want to with Jimmie, but if you two ever try anything like bootleggin' I'll set the cops on you so quick you'll be dizzy. (EXITS L.)

SLINKY HILMAN

She likes me!

WILLIE

Yeh, and I do too. Lissen, you aint never takin' Nettie out to no dance with you, see. She's jest my sister-in-law, but I think as much of her as I do my own sisk and as far as I'm concerned about you I'd just as soon give you a punch on the nose as not. (EXITS L.)

JIMMIE

Aw---he don't mean nuttin'.

SLINKY

He better not---treat me right and I'm glad to do a pal a good turn --my political infulence is always at the command of my friends---but any time a guy does me dir---say! I got a mob of gorillas that would just as soon creak a guy as look at him.

JIMMIE

Well, believe, me, Slinky, I'm sure needin' a few good turns done for me.

SLINKY

You didn't land any job yet, eh

JIMMIE

Naw. But I only been out of work three days---that aint nuttin'. What's worryin' me is what's the bride goin' to say when she finds out I'll have to break it to her pretty soon I suppose.

SLINKY

Why don't you come in with me on this proposition, Jimmie?

JIMMIE

Well, geez, Slinky* you didn't tell me what it was.

SLINKY

You should worry---what it is as long's there is real jack in it. I was talkin' to Poison Pete about you this mornin'.

JIMMIE

Who?

SLINKY

Poison Pete, you know, the Greek I was tell you about --you know, the one who that owns them drug stores. His regular monicker is Lon Pedro Popudopulos Poi Sonnie. But we call him Poison Pete for short.

JIMMIE

Sounds like a nice guy all right.

SLINKY

I'm tellin' you high society stuff too, knows all the police captains aldermen, everybody---

JIMMIE

But listen, now Slinky---these here stores he runs---some kind of joints or something?

SLINKY

What do you mean, joints?

JIMMIE

Well, this here now, job that---

SLINKY

I didn't offer you no job. I says if you don't get nothin' better I could may e give you a knock-down to Poison Pete and try to fix it up for you.

JIMMIE

Well, I mean now, don't he sell hooch?

SLINKY

Say, crack wise, willya? That ain no crime. What if he does? Aint he got all the best people for his customers?

JIMMIE

They been pullin' some pretty big raids lately.

SLINKY

That's all bluff, Jimmie. That don't affect Poison Pete none. Just a little camouflage to make the public think the enforcement officers is on the job. Naw, don't you worry, kid, it's all fixed.

JIMMIE

Fixed?

SLINKY

Sure. With the precinct.

JIMMIE

Oh- -With the pricinct!

SLINKY

If you're on the inside, you stand for a shake down of a couple of

of grand and they leave you alone. I wouldn't tell you this except you was a special friend of mine. Listen, I'll tell you a secret. You know Governor Smit'?

JIMMIE

Sure I know him---well, not personally, you understand---but -well- didn't I vote for him?

SLINKY

Well, I aint sayin' nutt2n'. Listen---you know Secretary Mellon?

JIMMIE

Sure. In the Senate.

SLINKY

Well, I aint sayin' nuttin' about him neither. But them is the kind of fish you'd like to travel with, aint it?

JIMMIE

Well geewhiz, they aint workin' in no bootleg joints.

SLINKY

Who said anything about workin'? Here, I've went considerable out of my way to come up here and see if there was anything I could do for you and you act like it was an extra-ordinary favor for you to consider the proposition.

JIMMIE

No, that aint the idea. I was just thikin' if I should land the job and Mary found out that I was peddlin' hooch.

SLINKY

Who's goin' to tell her outside of you? And that goes for everyone see. Not a whisper of what I told you---

JIMMIE

Sure, I'm next--

SLINKY

Of course this guy Popudupolus is a great feller, but if anything was spilled that spoiled his game well---are you wise?

JIMMIE

Aw I'm wise enough to keep my trap shut.

SLINKY

(HANDS HIM A FIVE DOLLAR BILL) Now lissen here's a five dollar bill to help you pull through the winter on---

JIMMIE

Gee! You're a real pa2, Slinky.

SLINKY

That aint nuttin'. You know what I'm p22nin' for you, Jim. I'm gonna fix it with Poison Pete so that you can start in and work with the idea of gettin' to be the manager of one of his stores. Well, I'm keepin' a very important guy waitin' for me, so I better step on it. Be good, Jimmie. See you in the bread line. (EXITS R. U.)

JIMMIE

Gee! He's a real guy!(MARY ENTERS L.) And that's the kind of a job

that I need. fixin' the window displays and conductin' the sales. Real money there, believe me. The managers---that's what I call a good job.

MARY

Yeah? And another good job is being president of the Standard Oil Company.

JIMMIE

Oh there you go again!

MARY

Well, take those good pants off and put on your old suit if you're going to rummage around. I'm going to hang it up now. What have you got ---the pockets all stuffed with junk. (PULLS OUT SEVERAL NEWSPAPERS WHICH ARE OPEN TO THE WANT ADDS. SHE LOOKS AT THESE A MINUTE) Say what is the idea?

JIMMIE

Idea of what?

MARY

Want adds. Want adds. Positions. Men wanted. Jimmie?

JIMMIE

All right! I'll tell you. I'm lookin' for a job. I've been looking for one for three days---that's the why of my good suit.

MARY

(DROPS IN A CHAIR) Jimmie! (BEGINS TO CRY)

JIMMIE

Now turn off the water works. ~~We-aint-ate~~ Leave me alone and see what I can do, will ya? We aint in the poor house yet, are we?

MARY

Oh aint we? How did you come to lose it?

JIMMIE

Oh I was just late a couple of mornings.

MARY

Pure D. Carelessness! It's bad enough to have to scrimp along on the lousy salary you had but this---Oh!

JIMMIE

Well, it aint no picnic for me, is it?

MARY

Then why could you be so dumb?

JIMMIE

Everything will come out pretty good if you just lay off me for awhile. I got a few things up my sleeve. I got friends workin' for me.

MARY

If instead of workin' your friends, you did some workin' yourself---

JIMMIE

Shut up, willya? Now, shut up. (THEY GLARE) I'll give you a slap in another minute.

MARY

MARY

You try it!

JIMMIE

(WEAKENING) Well I aint gonna be lackin' for somethin' to do if it comes down to that. I guess Slinky is lookin' out for me.

MARY

Slinky? (JIMMIE WALKS AWAY FROM HER AND GOES TO WINDOW HIS BACK TO HER. SHE FOLLOWS HIM UP) Slinky? Slinky?

JIMMIE

Yea---you want me to spell it for you?

MARY

Jimmie, we don't want no job that comes from Slinky Hillman.

JIMMIE

We! How do you know what we want?

MARY

You'll get in trouble if you deal with him. He couldn't possibly give you nothin' that was on the level.

JIMMIE

Well, don't be so mouthy. All he's goin' to do give me a knock down to a Creek guy called Pete---Poison---Popudo---poolo---whatever he said---I can't pronounce him---he owns a couple of drug stores.

MARY

If he's a friend of Slinky Hillman, then there's something wrong with him. Most likely they're bootleg joints maybe they sell dope.

JIMMIE

Sure. Maybe they murder guys. Well, that's a good line of work too. Maybe I could make enough money at that to keep my ball and chain from giving me the devil every time I step inside the door. (PUTS ON HIS COAT)

MARY

Where you goin'?

JIMMIE

I'm goin' out. I got some business matters to attend to.

MARY

You aint had your supper.

JIMMIE

I don't want none. Guys that's out of work aint got no right to eat any how.

MARY

(SOFTER) Now, Jimmie, I didn't say that. You sit down and have your supper.

JIMMIE

No. I don't want nothin'. (EXITS R. U.)

MARY

(GOES TO DOOR THEN STOPS) Jimmie---Oh shoot!

WILLIE
(ENTERS L. WITH SAXOPHONE) Want me to play a tune for you, Sis?

MARY
(SNAPS AT HIM) I should say I do not.

WILLIE
All right I will--(STARTS TO PLAY WHEN THERE IS A KNOCK AT THE DOOR)
(DUCKS LOW LIKE A CROOK)) Shhhhhh! The collector!

VOICE
(OFF STAGE R. U.) Say anybody home! (KNOCKS FOR A LONG TIME)(FINALLY
GIVES IT UP AS A BAD JOB) Hell!(WALKS AWAY DOWN THE HALL)

WILLIE
(SIGHS AND PATS THE SAXOPHONE) Ah! Baby! You still belong to papa!

***** NUMBER TWO *****

MARY
(ENTERS AND GOES TO THE CALENDAR COUNTS THE DAYS) Two weeks!

WIMMIE
(STANDS BEHIND HER) And not a sign of a job. Mary, I give up. I've
walked the streets for six hours today, and the best I get is promises.

MARY
Say you know the Berkleys up stairs in the next apartment? They own
a confectionary store---maybe they have something--

JIMMIE
Yeh, crackin' peanuts maybe---

MARY
Just the same I'm going up and see them---

SLINKY
(KNOCKS ON THE D. R. U.)

JIMMIE
Who's that?

MARY
How should I know. (STARTS TOWARD DOOR)

WILLIE
(ENTERS L QUICKLY.) Somebody knock? Shhhhhh! Shhhhhh! (ON HIS KNEES
PEEKS OUT KEY HOLE) It's all right. (OPENS DOOR AND ADMITS SLINKY)
Come in, and go out as quick as you want to. (EXITS L.)

SLINKY
Hello! How's the merry little family today?

MARY
Very well thank you. (EXITS D. R. U.) I'll be back after while, Jimmie
I'm going to see the Berkley's.

SLINKY
Still no luck, eh, old boy. Well, old fellow, I've got a little
job right in the palm of my hand. Ready to take it?

JIMMIE

Yes! I don't give a hang what it is. I'll take it and make good.

SLINKY

K. O! The first job you gotta do is lookin' after a suitcase that's got somethin' kind of valuable in it. Just takin' care of it for awhile.

JIMMIE

Well, I never was so strong for this here Eighteenth Amendment any how.

SLINKY

Then when I give you the word deliver it to a certain address that I'll slip you. Now here's half of your first week's salary. Fifteen bucks. (HANDS IT TO HIM)

JIMMIE

Cee--if Mary should find out about this---

SLINKY

Well, make up your mind what you're gonna do---

JIMMIE

I have. I'm goin' through with it.

SLINKY

I might as well be perfectly frank with you, Jimmie---this grip is loaded with high class pre-war Scotch---

JIMMIE

All right. I can be choosy now. Later maybe I'll get to be a manager huh?

SLINKY

Do this right, and there aint no tellin'---see?

JIMMIE

Where do I get this here suit case?

SLINKY

Listen. You go down the alley to Goldbagg's Cigar Store at five o'clock sharp, see? Daga Piggie McQuist will come through the front way and hand you the suit case---take it and say nothin' and keep it up here till I give you the further instructions---

JIMMIE

Gee Whiz---suppose some bull asks me---

SLINKY

No bull aint goin' to ask you. They don't suspicion you for nothin' It's a cinch as far as you're concerned. You got a right to carry a suit case up to your own flat, aint you?

JIMMIE

I'd like to see somebody stop me, huh?

SLINKY

Now, I'm gonna tell Poison Pete he can absolutely depend on you--

JIMMIE

Absolutely. Hey, listen, Slinky, this here Poison Pete---is he the bi

big smoke of the whole job?

SLINKY

Just for your own information, Jimmie, Poison Pete is number two. There's another fellow that's number one. We got a name for him but we don't none of us know him to meet, see? In case you should hear any of the other fellers gabbin', I better slip you the monicker we give him---(WHISPERS INTO JIMMIE'S EAR)

JIMMIE

The Works?

SLINKY

Eh---quiet---keep that under your hat.

NETTIE

(ENTERS R. U. WITH SAM LOBE) Come on, Lobe---I guess Sis is here---
(STOPS AT SEEING THEM) Oh--

SLINKY

'LO! Well, I guess I'll go . See ya later, Jimmie.(EXITS OUT D. R. U. AS SAM LOBE GIVES HIM THE ONCE OVER CRITICALLY)

SAM LOBE

Friend of yours, Jimmie?

JIMMIE

Sure. (PUTS ON HAT) Tell Mary I'll be back after while, Nettie. I'm goin' some place.

NETTIE

All right, Jimmie. Sam is going to stay for dinner tonight.(JIMMIE EXIT

SAM LOBE

Say, Nettie, I'm worried about Jimmie. What's he got that Slinky Hillman hanging around here for? He's not mixed up with him, is he?

NETTIE

Why, Sam--Jimmie wouldn't do anything like that.

SAM LOBE

Well, I sure hope he hasn't got himself implicated in any way. It sure would put me in a terrible position. Here I am on a personal basis in your home so to speak and at the same time investigating that bunch. I just followed a guy that was carrying a suit case of suspicious nature into the alley of the Goldberg's cigar store. I think that's a hang out of Slinky's.

NETTIE

What would there be in the suit case?

SAM LOBE

Bootleg. Before I could nab the guy he got away from me in a crowd. I'd like to land Slinky, and I sure don't want your brother mixed up in the deal.

NETTIE

Gee, I'd hate to have a conscience like yours. Did you hear what that fellow from Washington said about you---you know---when he found out you turned down that big brabe in the Buckingham case. He said, "That bird Sam Lobe is too honest to work for the government."

SAM LOBE
(SMILES) I'll never get rich that's sure.

MARY
(ENTERS R. U.) Hello. Where's Jimmie?

NETTIE
He just went out, Mary---said he would be back. Do you mind if Sam stays for dinner?

MARY
Why of course not, Nettie. We're not going to have much though, Sam---just some cold meat loaf---

SAM LOBE
Anything for me.

WILLIE
(ENTERS L.) Hello, Sam.

SAM LOBE
Hello, Paul Whiteman---how's your sax?

NETTIE
Don't talk about it, Sam. He might think we wanted him to play for us. Come on, Sam, let's go in the other room. (THEY EXIT L.)

WILLIE
Say, Mary, what's the matter with Jimmie?

MARY
Why?

WILLIE
I was lookin' out the window in the other room, and I saw him jump over the back fence with a suit case.

MARY
With a suit case?

JIMMIE
(ENTERS D. R. U. SNEAKINGLY. CARRIES A SUIT CASE WITH A PATCH IN ONE CORNER. HE LOOKS AT THEM SHEEPISHLY AND WIPES HIS FEET ON THE FLOOR)

MARY
What're you doin'?

JIMMIE
Wipin' my feet. What do you think I'm doin'? Me daily dozens?
(STARTS LER. WITH SUIT CASE VERY DIGNIFIED)

MARY
What's that?

JIMMIE
That's a suit case.

MARY
What's in it?

JIMMIE
Well, in the first place, I don't know what's in it, and in the second place----

Where did you get it?

JIMMIE

It's just a private suit case that belongs to a friend of mine that aks would I look after it for him for a few minutes, if you aint got no particular objections.

MARY

Where did you get it and what's in it?

JIMMIE

Say, for the love of Pete, what are you, the draft board or the income tax guy or something? (TO WILLIE) She fires a lot of questions at you and then expects---

MARY

You got that from Slinky Hillman---didn't you?

JIMMIE

Well, what if I did?

MARY

Willie, go in the other room. I want to talk to Jimmie alone--

WILLIE

Aww---I wanta see the fight from a ring side---

MARY

Get! (WILLIE EXITS L.) Have you got bootleg booze in that suitcase?

JIMMIE

(SHOWS ROLL OF BILLS) I'm workin', see! My employer tells me to do something I do it, don't I?

MARY

Listen, Jimmie--now listen to me. I aint always had such a wonderful life, Jimmie. I been poor and God knows I'm ignorant. I aint never had pretty dresses I'd like to wore. I aint never been to swell theaytres or places I'd like to have gone to. I had to work hard and sometimes I never had enough to eat and you know that, Jimmie, but they's one thing I have always been---honest.

JIMMIE

Now, listen, Mary, I aint doin' nothin' that aint done by the very best people and I can prove it.

MARY

They's bootleg booze in that suit case---you got from Slinky Hillman. Jimmie, what's got into you? Can't you see where you are startin' goin' around with crooks, and the first thing you know you will be with them right down in the gutter. But if that's where you are goin' I aint goin' with you. I been thinkin' it over, Jimmie, and I made up my mid it just come to this, you can take your choice, if that thing stays here, then I'm goin' to leave.

JIMMIE

(PICKING UP THE SUIT CASE AND STARTING FOR THE DOOR R. U.) Pick up the dice, you win. I don't know where it's goin', but it's on it's way.

MARY

Jimmie, I knew you would. Now I'm going to get you a nice supper. (EXITS L.)

JIMMIE

(WATCHES HER EXIT. THINKS A MINUTE. STARTS TO GO OUT D. R. U. THEN CHANGES HIS MIND AND QUICKLY SPEAKS THE SUIT CASE IN THE CLOSET DOOR C. DOES IT JUST IN TIME AS MARY ENTERS WITH SOME DISHES)

MARY

You get rid of it?

JIMMIE

Uh huh!

MARY

(PLACING THE DISHES ON THE TABLE) Good thing you did.

NETTIE

(ENTERS L. WITH HER HAT IN HER HAND) Wait a minute, Sam. I want to put this hat in the closet. I'll be back. (SHE GOES TO THE CLOSET. JIMMIE MUGS. SHE FALLS OVER THE SUIT CASE AND PULLS IT OUT ON THE STAGE) Well, who put this big thing in here?

JIMMIE

(HOLDS HIS HEAD) Oh!

MARY

Jimmie! Oh what's the use? ~~(KIDNAPES KIDNAPES KIDNAPES KIDNAPES)~~ I told you to get rid of that stuff?

JIMMIE

By jeez, Mary, what can I do with it? I can't take it back to the guy I got it from, and it's a cinch I don't want to be seen walking the streets with it

NETTIE

What's in it?

MARY

Bootlegg!

NETTIE

No?

MARY

Yes --the boy wonder over there thought he'd turn out a bright deal.

NETTIE

Why, Jimmie you're sure to get caught.

JIMMIE

I couldn't help it with such dumb heads as you two are.

NETTIE

And they are just raiding right and left. This whole district is going to be cleaned up---(A KNOCK ON THE DOOR R. U. IS HEARD)

JIMMIE

Good lord! Who's that?

NETTIE

It might be the law---who knows?

JIMMIE

Shut up! (SHOVES SUIT CASE UNDER THE BIG ARM CHAIR AND SITS IN THE CHAIR)

MARY
Go answer the door. (NETTIE STARTS)

WILLIE
(ENTERS L. U. QUICKLY) Shhh! Don't answer that yet. Wait! It might be the saxophone's papa. Shhhh! Shhhh! (GOES TO DOOR AND PEEKS THROUGH KEY HOLE) Nope! It's O. K. (Opens the door a little) What do you want

VOICE
(REAL GRUFF) Sam Love here?

WILLIE
Sure!

VOICE
Well, tell him this is O' Flaherty. I want to see him in the hall a minute.

WILLIE
All right. (CALLS OFF L.) Sam!

SAM
(ENTERS L.) What is it?

WILLIE
A guy by the name of O'Flaherty wants to see you.

SAM
Oh all right. Excuse me, please. (EXITS R. U.)

JIMMIE
Who was it ---a plain clothesman.

WILLIE
Yea?

JIMMIE
Good night this is no time to have plain clothes men around.

NETTIE
I don't know whatever possessed you, Jimmie.

JIMMIE
Oh I wanted to do something.

MARY
You did!

NETTIE
~~and the fellow who was carrying a suit case all day?~~ Do you know Sam's been chasing a fellow who was carrying a suit case all day?

JIMMIE
Huh?

NETTIE
Yes, he followed some fellow who carried one down in the alley near Goldberg's Cigar Store.

JIMMIE
Oh! I'm sick! I'm sick!

SAM LOBE

(ENTERS R. U.) Just a brother officer. They 've got a suspicion. Some one was seen carrying the same suit case that we've been on the track of into this apartment.

MARY

No!

SAM LOBE

Yes. O'Flaherty traced him here, and lost him. Blame we've had tough luck with that suit case. (SEES TABLE) What's this---dinner already?

MARY

(NERVOUSLY) Oh---er---yes., Let's all sit down and eat.

NETTIE

Yes. Come on, Sam. You sit here. (SAM AND NETTIE SIT FACING THE AUDIENCE. MARY SITS ON THE L. OF THE TABLE. WILLIE SITS WITH HIS BACK TO THE AUDIENCE) (JIMMIE STILL SITS IN THE BIG CHAIR ON THE R.)

MARY

Well, come on, Jimmie, and sit down.

JIMMIE

I'll---I'll---get there---leave me alone. (JIMMIE DRAGS THE BIG CHAIR HALF SITTING IN IT. DOES IT SUCH A MANNER THAT THE SUIT CASE IS DRUG ALONG WITH THE CHAIR.)

SAM

What's the matter, Jimmie?

JIMMIE

Funny thing! I've got corns---and ever since I've had them I always walk sitting down. (GETS UP TO THE TABLE AND FINALLY SLIDES THE SUIT CASE UNDER THE TABLE) I---I aint real hungry.

MARY

(PASSES HIM THE MEAT LOAF) Fine! Have some meat loaf.

NETTIE

They're certainly cleaning up the distract lately aren't they, Sam?

SAM

(EATING) Oh yes. We're out to get that gang of Slinky Hillman's---of course it isn't really his gang---but then he's a member---the one we want is---the Works---the big head of the whole business---

JIMMIE

(HISTTEETH CHATTERING A LITTLE AND HIS FORK SHAKING AS HE TRIES TO EAT Do--d-----d-d-d you think you'll get 'em?

SAM

Well, they're slick. Just like the incident of the suit case. We got tipped off about it. We start following the fellow from the ship yards where he got it. I get him down in Goldberg's alley and although I watch him sharp as everything---he's gone. Then O'Flaherty follows somebody with the same mysterious suit case right into this apartment and loses him. The solution is that the fellow I followed got into the cigar store unloaded the suit case on another fellow, and he carried it up here----

JIMMIE

What--what kind of a lookin' fellow was it that carried the grip here

SAM

O'Flaherty says he was a little short guy---sort of had a monkey face

JIMMIE

Oh!

SAM

We'll land him!

WILLIE

(HAS BEEN KICKING HIS FEET AGAINST THE SUIT CASE UNDER THE TABLE AND THINKS THAT ~~THEYDARED~~ IT IS JIMMIE'S FEET.) Say will you get your big feet out of the way?

JIMMIE

Aw, who's got their big feet in the way?

WILLIE

YOU HAVE TOO! (GIVES THE SUIT CASE A KICK AND IT GOES OUT ON THE FLOOR)

JIMMIE

Oh! Now you've done it.

SAM

(LOOKING AT IT) Why what's that?

MARY

Oh it's nothing. It---it's an old suit case I always have under table to rest my feet on--

SAM

It looks mighty suspicious to me---it-- (GETS UP AND LOOKS AT IT)

JIMMIE

(TREMBLING WITH FRIGHT AND ANGER. TO WILLIE) See what you done?

WILLIE

Jeez! I didn't know it was that.

SAM

(PICKING HIM UP QUICKLY) Didn't know it was what?

WILLIE

Nothin'!

SAM

This suit case has got the same patch in the corner as the one I followed. You folks aren't---trying to--

JIMMIE

(ALL TO PIECES) Well--he--he only lent it to me--he only--

SAM

To you? This is the suit case that Slinky Hillman--

JIMMIE

Well, I admit it. I---

MARY

JIMMIE

Noit aint! I was wong. I---I---they aint nothin' in---it's--it's--my laundry!

SAM

Your laundry? (BEGINS OPENING THE SUIT CASE)

JIMMIE

I tell you it aint nothin'. It's my laundry. It's my laundry?

SAM

(PULLS OUT A BOTTLE OF SCOTCH AND HOLDS IT UP) Your laundry.

JIMMIE

Yeh---my wet wash!

MARY

Oh, Jimmie!

JIMMIE

(WITH NERVOUS PROSTRATION) Aw---well go ahead and take me. Gee, after what I've been through, it'll be a relief to go to jail.

SAM

Folks, I'm your guest her, but I've really got to investigate this. (IS GOING ALL OVER THE SUIT CASE)

NETTIE

Sam, you 're not going to arrest Jimmie?

SAM

What else in this suit case, Jimmie?

JIMMIE

Nuttin'! Jeez aint they enough of it there?

SAM

You better tell me the truth, Jimmie.

JIMMIE

I told you, didn't I?

SAM

How do you open this false bottom?

JIMMIE

Open what---what---what?

SAM

Never mind. (OPENS IT) There!

JIMMIE

What's that? Dope?

SAM

Yes, hcp, snow---dope---about five thousand dollars' worth. I'm sorry you didn't tell me the truth in the first place.

JIMMIE

I didn't know it was there. I swear on the Bible I didn't know it was there. (SAM REGARDS HIM COLDLY) I wouldn't peddle no dope. It

was hop-heads that shot my old man---I hate the dirty stuff---Slinky knows that too---I'm the fall guy all right---the easy mark. I wouldn't peddle no dope. Aw, what's the use. Well, I guess you was right, Mary. (BOWS HIS HEAD SOBBING)

***** NUMBER THREE *****

SAM

(IS ON WITH NETTIE) You can see the position I am in, Nettie.

NETTIE

It is for you to decide, Sam. But honest you know my brother wouldn't peddle no dope. He was framed. Slinky just played him for a sap.

SAM

If I didn't do something about this my conscience would hurt me awfully.

NETTIE

Well, if you send my brother up, I'm absolutely through, understand.

JIMMIE

(ENTERS FROM L. TURNS AND CALLS IN) Aw---gee--Mary, don't cry any more. Gosh! I---I---oh what the--

SAM

Nettie, will you leave Jimmie and I alone for a few minutes ~~CERTAINLY~~

NETTIE

Certainly. (EXITS L.)

SAM

So you never knew there was snow in it, huh?

JIMMIE

No sir!

SAM

What would you do to get out of this?

JIMMIE

You mean you'll give me a chance?

SAM

If you'll do what I want you to. I've got to get the goods on these crooks---and especially this one crook. Is Slinky supposed to come up here and get that suit case?

JIMMIE

Yes--he ought to be here pretty soon now--the dirty bum.

SAM

Well, I'm going to let you talk to him. I want you to see if you can find out who the real bird is that's responsible for this gang. They call him the Works. If you can find out who the Works is, Jimmie -

JIMMIE

Don't worry, I will!

SLINKY

(RINGS BYBEE KNOCKS ON THE DOOR)

JIMMIE

That's Slinky now.

SAM

I'll be in the other room. Pump him---we want to know who is the Works. (STARTS TO EXIT AS JIMMIE GOES TO D. R. U.)

WILLIE

(ENTERS L.) Shhhhh! Not yet! (PEEPS OUT KEY HOLE) Yeah. It's all right. (EXITS WITH SAM)

JIMMIE

(PICKS UP A CHAIR AND STANDS BACK OF DOOR) Come in, Slinky.

SLINKY

(ENTERS AND CATCHES CHAIR AS JIMMIE IS ABOUT TO LET HIM HAVE) Say what's the idea---tryin' to brain me?

JIMMIE

Sure. You double crossed me! You wished a bunch of hop on me without tipping me off, or giving me a chance to cut in on the profits or nothin'.

SLINKY

(A TRIFLE DISTURBED) Aw---well--

JIMMIE

And listen just by that I might have got you and The Works and the whole gang into a lot of trouble, if I hadn't been a quicker thinker---and just because you wasn't on the level about the dope.

SLINKY

How's that?

JIMMIE

Lissen, didn't a guy come up her and represent himself to be sent by you to me and askin' for the suit case? And then when I wouldn't give it to him, he said you wanted to see me and asked me to come outside, and I goes out and we gets in a car and rides down to 125th Street and there they take in another guy. And--

SLINKY

Go ahead.

JIMMIE

Well, this other guy, he says, now, he says, "Never mind 'bout what order Mr. Hillman give you, you can do with that suitcase like I tell you," he says. Well, I comes right back at him I says, "Who are you?" ---"Don't you know me," he says, "I'm the Works."

SLINKY

The dirty liar.

JIMMIE

Well now it might have been the Works, Slinky.

SLINKY

No. I tell you. I know it wasn't. You didn't give it to him?

JIMMIE

Wait till I get to that, will you? Don't get me mixed, I was right ready for him with another one. I says, "What Works," Isays, "The

Bottle Works or the Water Works?" Pretty good, eh?

SLINKY

What sort of a lookin' guy was this second fella?

JIMMIE

Oh just a regular lookin' fella. Might have been smooth-faced but he hadn't shaved for quite a while.

SLINKY

I don't make him at all, at all.

JIMMIE

Wait'll I finish. He takes me by the arm and looks at me very firm and dirty and says, "Listen, you. I am the Works."

SLINKY

But I tell you that wasn't the Works.

JIMMIE

Where you been since you was here, Slinky?

SLINKY

I was over to Goldberg's Cigar Store all the time but that---

JIMMIE

Then how do you know it wasn't the Works?

SLINKY

'Cause I know. I thought I seen dicks tailin' me. That's what it is, the dicks are after us.

JIMMIE

Anyhow, when this fella, he seen he couldn't get nothing out of me without he knows the password, so he pulls out a roll of bills and "Where's the snow?" Right away I was wised up. I seen you done me double on that suitcase but I aint the kind that goes back on a pal, Slinky. Just then we had to slow up in a traffic jam by the subway and I jumped through the door and out of sight without waiting to kiss them good-bye or anything. And then after gettin' back here and hidin' the suitcase where they can't find it, you have to come trailin' here, like as not brigin' half the police force along the rear of you.

SLINKY

Jimmie, you done good work. You used your bean all right, I got a hand it to you. I should a' made you a full partner in the first place, but I wanted to try you out and see what you were good for--- Listen---we'll be pard. Now I'm the Works, and---(PUTS ARMS AROUND HIM)

JIMMIE

(FINALLY EXPLODING HIM* THROWS HIS ARMS OFF HIS SHOULDERS AND TURNS ON SLINKY) So you're the works are you. Well I wante d to find out. Listen, you're going up the river for this. You tried to make a fall guy outa me, but maybe you're the fall guy after all. You fell for my story fine didn't you? Just gave yourself up great!

SLINKY

(SPRINGS AT JIMMIE) Why you, dirty little---

JIMMIE

(SMACKS HIM ONE QUICK AND DUCKS

SAM LOBE
(ENTERS L.) Throw 'em up, Slinky. In the name of the United States Government I arrest you. (NETTIE, MARY, AND WILLIE ENTER HE HAS HIS SAXOPHONE)

SLINKY
(SLOWLY THROWS UP HIS HANDS) Why you---

SAM LOBE
(HAND CUFFS HIM) So you're the Works, eh? Well, we'll give you the works. (TURNS HIM AROUND AND PUSHES HIM OUT TOWARDS D. R. U.) Come on.

SLINKY
(GLARING AT JIMMIE) You dirty little stinker! I'll get you---damn you---I'll--you'll see---you---

JIMMIE
Remember anything you say will be used against you.

SAM LOBE
Here, O'Flaherty take this guy down---I'll be down to headquarters in a minute. (SHOVES SLINKY OFF) Well, Jimmie, that was clever work. You seem to know a good deal about crook psychology.

JIMMIE
Yeah. Maybe I aint so dumb, huh? I know crooks all right. Fact of the matter is some of the very best friends I have got in the world is in jail.

SAM LOBE
Say how would you like to have a job on the force?

JIMMIE
(EAGERLY) Can you fix it?

SAM LOBE
Sure I can.

NETTIE
Oh you, dear! (IN SAM'S ARMS)

JIMMIE
Aint that great, Mary. I'm gonna be a cop---

MARY
(HUGGING HIM) Just like your father was---Jimmie, I always did think you was cut out for a cop.

JIMMIE
Why?

MARY
You got such big flat feet!

JIMMIE
Aw, crack wise, will ya?

WILLIE
Well, folks, everybody happy? Guess I'll play a little tune in honor of the occasion. (BLOWS SOME REAL SOUR NOTES) Ow! I blow in that so sweet, and it comes out so sour!

COLLECTOR

(KNOCKS ON THE DOOR R. U.)

WILLIE

Shhhhhhh! (SETS SAXOPHONE ON THE TABLE) The Saxophone's Papa!
(IS KNEELING DOWN BY THE KEY HOLE)

COLLECTOR

(ENTERS THROUGH THE WINDOW PICKS UP SAXOPHONE) Ever get fooled!
(WALKS OUT)

!!!!!! FINALE !!!!!!!